

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A book page holder device comprising:

a substantially thin, ~~flat~~ and rigid support member having substantially flat spaced apart upper and lower surfaces extending between first and second spaced apart edges; and
an elastic retaining means having means for anchoring first and second opposite ends thereof to the support member surfaces adjacent to the respective first and second spaced apart edges ~~of the support member~~.

Claim 2 (original): The device of claim 1 wherein the anchoring means further comprises one or more hook-shaped mechanical edge gripper secured to the elastic retaining means.

Claim 3 (original): The device of claim 1 wherein the elastic retaining means further comprises a fabric-covered elastic material having the anchoring means formed at first and second opposite ends thereof.

Claim 4 (original): The device of claim 1 wherein the support member further comprises a substantially rigid material.

Claim 5 (currently amended): The device of claim 1 wherein the support member further comprises first and second passages formed through the upper and lower support member surfaces adjacent the first and second spaced apart edges with the passages being sized to accept the elastic retaining means there through and to reject the anchoring means from entering thereinto and being spaced apart farther than a distance between the anchoring means when the elastic retaining means is in a relaxed state.

Claim 6 (original): The device of claim 5 wherein one or more of the first and second passages is a slot communicating with an edge of the support member.

Claim 7 (original): The device of claim 5 wherein one or more of the first and second passages is an aperture adjacent to an edge of the support member and communicating between opposite surfaces thereof.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The device of claim 5 wherein the anchoring means ~~further comprises one of~~ is selected from the group of anchoring means consisting of one or more loops formed in the elastic retaining means, one or more knots formed in the elastic retaining means, one or more mechanical clips each having a slot formed therein sized more narrow than the elastic retaining means, one or more hooks each secured to the elastic retaining means, and one or more mechanical crimp-on clips each having a pliable portion crimped onto the elastic retaining means.

Claim 9 (currently amended): A book page holder device for holding open the pages of a book, the book page holder device comprising:

~~a substantially flat and rigid support member of substantially constant cross-section between substantially flat spaced-apart upper and lower surfaces sized wider than one of a standard sized hard cover and a standard sized paperback book in an open state and being formed with two opposing edges spaced apart across the width of the support member surfaces a distance that is approximately a width of one of a standard sized hard cover and a standard sized paperback book in an open state; and~~

an elongated resilient elastic retainer structured to extend between the two spaced-apart edges and having first and second anchors provided adjacent to respective first and second opposite ends thereof, the anchors being structured to secure the first and second opposite ends of the elastic retainer to the substantially flat support member surfaces adjacent to the respective spaced-apart edges ~~thereof of the support member~~.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The book page holder device of claim 9 wherein the support member is formed of an elongated bar having at least one passage through the elongated bar and positioned adjacent to one of the first and second ends of the elongated bar;

the elastic retainer is further structured to pass through the passage; and

at least one of the anchors is further structured to be unable to pass through the passage.

Claim 11 (original): The book page holder device of claim 10 wherein the support member further comprises at least two spaced-apart passages adjacent the respective opposing edges, and wherein at least one of the two spaced-apart passages further comprises a slot through a thickness of the support member and communicating with an edge thereof.

Claim 12 (original): The book page holder device of claim 10 wherein the support member further comprises at least two spaced-apart passages adjacent the respective opposing edges, and wherein at least one of the two spaced-apart passages further comprises an aperture formed through a thickness of the support member and positioned adjacent an edge thereof.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The book page holder device of claim 9 wherein the support member is formed of a material selected from the group of materials consisting of: plastic, Plexiglas, acrylic, wood, and metal.

Claim 14 (original): The book page holder device of claim 9 wherein the support member is formed of a rectangular plate including the two spaced-apart edges.

Claim 15 (original): The book page holder device of claim 9 wherein the elastic retainer further comprises an elastic material having a slippery contact surface and having the anchoring means formed at first and second opposite ends thereof.

Claim 16 (currently amended): The book page holder device of claim 15 wherein the first and second anchors further comprise an anchor selected from the group of anchors consisting of: a loop, a knot, a hook, a slip-on clip, and a crimp-on clip.

Claim 17 (original): The book page holder device of claim 15 wherein elastic retainer further comprises a plurality of the anchoring means formed at one of the first and second opposite ends thereof.

Claim 18 (original): The book page holder device of claim 9 wherein the support member further comprises means for compacting the support member.

Claim 19 (currently amended): ~~18 wherein~~ A book page holder device for holding open the pages of a book, the book page holder device comprising:

a substantially flat and rigid support member formed with two opposing edges spaced apart across the width of the support member, the support member further comprising the means for compacting the support member further comprises one selected from the group of compacting means consisting of means for telescoping a first portion of the support member relative to a second portion thereof, and means for folding the first portion of the support member relative to the second portion thereof; and

an elongated resilient elastic retainer structured to extend between the two spaced-apart edges and having first and second anchors provided adjacent to respective first and second opposite ends thereof, the anchors being structured to secure the first and second opposite ends of the elastic retainer adjacent to the respective spaced-apart edges of the support member.

Claim 20 (currently amended): A book page holder device, comprising:

a substantially rigid elongated support bar sized to accommodate an open book and having substantially planar first and second operating surfaces extending between first and second spaced-apart ends thereof being spaced apart far enough to position the open book therebetween with the first and second ends extending beyond the extents of the open book; and

an elongated resilient elastic retainer having first and second ends anchored to the first and second ends of the support bar operating surfaces adjacent the first and second ends thereof with at least one of the first and second ends of the elastic retainer being releasably so anchored, the elastic retainer being in tension when so anchored to the support bar operating surfaces.

Claim 21 (original): The device of claim 20 wherein the elastic retainer further comprises anchors on each of its first and second ends.

Claim 22 (currently amended): The device of claim 21 wherein the support bar further comprises a passage formed as a slot communicating with a first edge portion of the support bar adjacent the first end thereof; and one of the anchors ~~further comprises one is~~ selected from the group of anchors consisting of a loop formed in the elastic retainer, a knot formed in the elastic retainer, a

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hook secured to the elastic retainer, a slip-on clip secured to the elastic retainer, and a crimp-on clip secured to the elastic retainer.

Claim 23 (currently amended): The device of claim 22 wherein a second one of the passages is formed as an aperture passing through the support bar operating surfaces.

Claim 24 (currently amended): The device of claim 23 wherein the support bar further comprises a second passage formed as a second slot communicating with a second edge portion of the support bar operating surfaces adjacent the second end thereof.